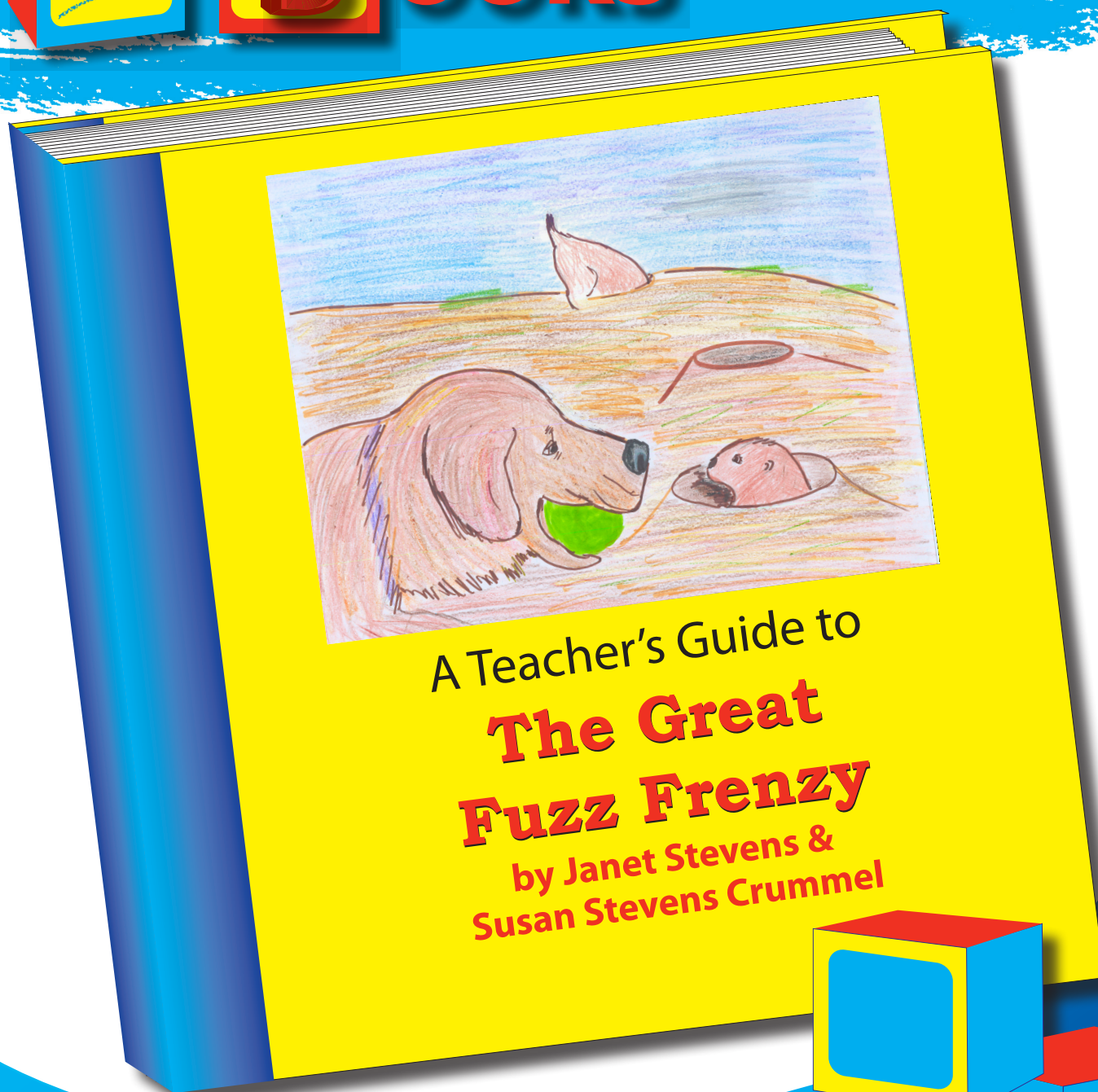


Thoughtful Books

GRADE
1+



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Note to parents and teachers

The Thoughtful Books Series makes use of exemplary children's literature to help young readers learn to read critically and to thoughtfully consider ethical matters. Critical thinkers rely on inquisitive attitudes, utilize thinking strategies, access background knowledge, understand thinking vocabulary, and apply relevant criteria when making thoughtful decisions. We refer to these attributes as intellectual tools. Each resource in this series features specific intellectual tools supporting literacy development and ethical deliberation. Teachers and parents can introduce the tools using the suggested activities in this resource, and then support learners in applying the tools in various situations overtime, until children use them independently, selectively, and naturally.

Reading as thinking

Reading is more than decoding words. It is the active process of constructing meaning. Good readers understand this process as engagement in critical thinking. They employ specific literacy competencies as they engage with text, create meaning from text, and extend their thinking beyond text. The activities in this booklet help develop the following literacy competencies:

- *Reading with a purpose:* Good readers are clear about why they are reading a text, either by bringing a specific objective to their reading or by anticipating the author's objectives. In this case, students look for the feelings experienced by the prairie dogs.
- *Inferring:* Good readers generate conclusions and hypotheses based on textual clues and evidence. In this case, students infer what the characters of Pip Squeak and Big Bark are like based on their actions in the story.
- *Anticipating:* Good readers apply their prior knowledge and experiences to anticipate what might come next. In this case, based on what they know about the characters, students anticipate what will happen when Violet drops the ball a second time
- *Synthesizing ideas:* Good readers thoughtfully apply key ideas and issues raised in a text to their own lives and in broader community and global contexts. In this case, students identify the lesson learned within the story and discuss how it applies to everyday life.

Ethical considerations

A second focus of the activities in this booklet is to help learners develop the intellectual tools they need to think critically about ethical considerations. It is important to teach the tools, often through modelling and illustrating with examples, and continue to apply the tools in a variety of situations over time, until learners internalize them. The following ethical considerations are addressed in this resource:

- *Thinking for yourself:* Critical thinkers are independent-minded and able to think for themselves. In the story, this quality was demonstrated by the actions of Pip Squeak. Students examine how Pip Squeak influenced the situations in the story and draw a lesson from these events.
- *Empathy:* Critical thinkers are able to put themselves in the place of others. In the story, Pip Squeak demonstrated empathy and understanding of Big Bark, responding to him in ways that changed his behaviour. Hopefully, students will recognize this as they examine possible lessons in the story.

TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR: *The Great Fuzz Frenzy*

by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel

Critical task/ questions

Write or draw a plausible sequel to the story.

What lesson(s) did the prairie dogs learn in this story?

What is the most important lesson we can learn from this story?

Story

The Great Fuzz Frenzy by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel, illustrated by Janet Stevens, Harcourt Inc. (2005).

Summary

This story centres on the fear, joy, and eventual discord that occurs after some prairie dogs discover a strange yellow object in their underground home. Students examine the story closely, particularly the development of the characters. Based on what is known about the characters, students create a sequel to the story and identify the lessons learned in the story.

Main focus

Literacy competencies

- reading with a purpose
- inferring
- anticipating
- synthesizing ideas

Ethical considerations

- thinking for yourself
- empathy

Levels of involvement

Consider students' interest and their level of maturity to determine whether or not all three levels of after-reading activities are appropriate.

- *Exposure:* Describe the qualities of Big Bark and Pip Squeak based on their actions in the story.
- *Investigation:* What will happen next? Write or draw a plausible sequel to the story.
- *Application:* What is the most important lesson the prairie dogs learned in this story? What lesson might we learn?

Activities

Session One

Before reading

Introduce the story

- Hold up a tennis ball and say, “I’m going to read you a story about a tennis ball that caused a big problem.” Ask students to suggest how a tennis ball might be problematic.
- Tell students the problem was so bad it went from a frenzy to a fiasco.
- Print these words on the board and discuss their meanings with students.

During reading

Identify the emotions that the prairie dogs experienced

- Show students the book cover and read the title together. Ask students what they think the story will be about and how the characters in the story might get a tennis ball.
- Show the inside front cover page to find the answer.

Reading with a purpose

- Ask students to listen to the story to find out how the prairie dogs feel when the ball enters their home. Read the story, stopping at the following points to ask how the tennis ball is influencing the way the prairie dogs feel:
 - after the tennis ball lands at the bottom of the hole and the prairie dogs creep out—“Is it alive?” (*scared, surprised, bewildered*).
 - after they first discover the “fuzz”—“fuzzed their feet, their tails, their toeses” (*curious, excited*).
 - when they really begin to get creative with the fuzz—“abuzz about fuzz” (*happy, joyful, creative*).
 - when they argue about who got the most fuzz—“Fuzzled out. Fast asleep” (*angry, accusing, jealous*).
- Read the next two pages (about when the prairie dogs wake up) and ask students who they think took the fuzz.
- Read to the end of the story, but do not show the picture of Violet on the inside back cover.

After reading: exposure level

Describe the qualities of Big Bark and Pip Squeak

- Invite students to think about the characters of Big Bark and Pip Squeak. Ask students what they know about the characters based on their names.
- Explain that an author uses words and actions to tell readers about characters.

Inferring

- Tell students you are going to read the story again and this time they are to think about how they would describe Big Bark and Pip Squeak, based on the things they do in the story. Use the following example to model making inferences:
 - If I smiled at you, what might you think? (*I was a friendly person.*)
 - If I was crying, what might you think? (*I was sad or hurt.*)
 - If I was holding my arms and shivering, what might you think? (*I was cold.*)
- Read the story, stopping when Big Bark admits to stealing the fuzz.
- In A/B pairs or as a class, brainstorm what qualities Big Bark and Pip Squeak possess, based on their actions in the story.
- If students are working in A/B pairs, provide each pair with a copy of Blackline Masters #1A and #1B to record their thinking. Then invite students to share their ideas with the class.
- If this is a whole class activity, invite students to discuss their ideas in A/B pairs first, then, as a class, create a chart similar to the one below.

Blackline Master #1A

Name: _____

Was	We know this because
big	He was named Big Bark.

Blackline Master #1B

Name: _____

Was	We know this because
small	She was named Pip Squeak. Big Bark calls her "half-pint".

Draw Pip Squeak before the eagle came.

Draw Pip Squeak after the eagle came.

Thoughtful Book Series – Teacher Guide

The Critical Thinking Consortium

Big Bark was

	We think this because he . . .
<i>big</i>	<i>was called Big Bark</i>
<i>bossy</i>	<i>said “get out of my way”</i>
<i>mean</i>	<i>yelled at the prairie dogs snarled at Pip Squeak</i>
<i>a bully</i>	<i>said he was boss stole the fuzz</i>
<i>afraid</i>	<i>was taken by the eagle</i>
<i>strong</i>	<i>escaped from the eagle</i>
<i>responsible</i>	<i>warned them about the eagle</i>
<i>proud</i>	<i>smiled when they cheered for him</i>

Pip Squeak was

	We think this because he . . .
<i>small</i>	<i>was called Pip Squeak</i>
<i>brave</i>	<i>she went past Big Bark and touched the ball</i>
<i>playful, curious</i>	<i>played with the fuzz</i>
<i>responsible</i>	<i>thought Big Bark started the fight and tried to stop it</i>
<i>sorry for Big Bark</i>	<i>said they should save Big Bark</i>
<i>strong, thoughtful, kind</i>	<i>told the others to “get back here” and catch Big Bark suggested Big Bark be the watchdog</i>
<i>hopeful, peaceful</i>	<i>said there would be no more fuzz</i>

- Show students the page in the story where the eagle swoops down and the sky goes black. Point out that many things change in the story at this point. Continue reading to the end of the story, but do not show the last picture of Violet on the inside back cover.
- Review the events in the last half of the story and, as a class, add to the character charts of Big Bark and Pip Squeak as indicated in the shaded areas of the example above.
- Discuss with students which character(s) changed in the story and what caused them to change. If appropriate, use the bottom section of Blackline Masters #1A and #1B to depict changes in Big Bark and Pip Squeak.

Begin New Session

After reading: investigation level

- Review the events of the story using only the pictures. Read the last page of the story. Ask students if they think the prairie dogs would live “fuzzlessly ever after”?
- Show the last picture of Violet.
- Brainstorm with students how the prairie dogs’ community is different at the end of the story from the way it was at the beginning.
 - *Before Big Bark was a bully; now he is a watchdog.*
 - *Before the prairie dogs had never seen fuzz; now they have had a bad experience.*
 - *Before they didn’t know how to share; now they have worked together to solve a problem.*
 - *Before the prairie dogs got into trouble with the fuzz; now they have promised not to get tangled up with fuzz again.*
 - *Before Pip Squeak was just a small dog in the community; now Pip Squeak is a leader.*
- Ask: “What will happen when Violet drops the ball? Will there be another fiasco or not?”
- Brainstorm with students possible reasons why there could be another fiasco and reasons there would not be (how it could be prevented), based on what they know about the characters in the story. Record students’ reasons in a chart similar to the one below. Older students might work in groups and create their own chart.

Anticipating

Will there be another fiasco?

Yes	No

- Show the last picture in the book again and pose the question, “What will happen when Violet drops the ball?” Invite students to represent either in writing or drawing a sequel to the story. If appropriate, provide a copy of Blackline Master #2 for students to record their thinking.

Begin New Session

After reading: application level

- Ask students what problems the prairie dogs faced (they were afraid of the fuzz and Big Bark was a bully).
- Discuss how the two problems were solved in the story.

- [illegible]

Assessment

- Use the rubric *Assessing sequels, lessons and inference* (Blackline Master #4) to assess students' ability to infer character qualities, create a plausible ending and identify a lesson.

Blackline Master #4

Assessing sequels, lessons and inference

	Sophisticated understanding	Extended understanding	Basic understanding	Partial recognition	Prerecognition
Recognizes a plausible sequel to the story	Creates a highly plausible, logical sequel that incorporates key elements from the story and offers an intuitive solution to the pending focus.	Creates a plausible, logical sequel that is true to the story and offers a reasonable solution to the pending focus.	Creates a plausible sequel to the pending focus. Repeats a simple solution to the pending focus.	With prompting or support is able to recognize and create a sequel; it may or may not be plausible.	Is unable to recognize or create a plausible sequel.
Identifies an important lesson in the story	Identifies the most important lesson (i.e., having empathy or thinking empathetically or thinking for yourself and clearly explains why it is important; simple explanation of why it is important).	Identifies an important lesson (i.e., having empathy or thinking for yourself and offers a simple explanation of why it is important).	Identifies an important general lesson but does not explain its importance.	Identifies a lesson that may not be important.	Cannot identify an important lesson.
Draws a plausible inferences	Effectively uses clues to draw subtle, plausible inferences about the characters, their actions and changes.	Uses clues to draw plausible inferences about the characters, their actions and changes.	Uses clues to draw obvious inferences about the characters or their actions. May require occasional support.	With support, has difficulty consistently identifying even obvious inferences about the characters or their actions.	Is unable to draw inferences about the characters.

Comments: _____

Name: _____

Thoughtful Book Series – The Great Fuzz Frenzy

The Critical Thinking Consortium

Big Bark

Was	We know this because
big	He was named Big Bark.

**Draw Big Bark
before he was captured.**

**Draw Big Bark
after his rescue.**

Pip Squeak

Was	We know this because
small	She was named Pip Squeak. Big Bark calls her "half-pint".

**Draw Pip Squeak
before the eagle came.**

**Draw Pip Squeak
after the eagle came.**

What will happen next?

by _____

When Violet drops the ball, there _____ be
another fiasco because _____

The most important lesson

The most important lesson in this story is _____

This lesson is important because _____

Assessing sequels, lessons and inference

	Sophisticated understanding	Extended understanding	Basic understanding	Partial recognition	Pre-recognition
Recognizes a plausible sequel to the story	Creates a highly plausible, logical sequel that incorporates key elements from the story and offers an intuitive solution to the pending fiasco.	Creates a plausible, logical sequel that is true to the story and offers a reasonable solution to the pending fiasco.	Creates a plausible sequel. Repeats a simple solution to the pending fiasco.	With prompting or support is able to recognize and create a sequel; it may or may not be plausible.	Is unable to recognize or create a plausible sequel.
Identifies an important lesson in the story	Identifies the most important ethical lesson (i.e., having empathy or thinking for yourself) and clearly explains why it is important. Is able to describe how the lesson can be applied to his/her own life.	Identifies an important ethical lesson (i.e., having empathy or thinking for yourself) and offers a simple explanation of why it is important.	Identifies an important, general lesson but does not explain its importance.	Identifies a lesson that may not be important.	Cannot identify an important lesson.
Draws a plausible inferences	Effectively uses clues to draw subtle, plausible inferences about the characters, their actions and changes.	Uses clues to draw plausible inferences about the characters, their actions and changes.	Uses clues to draw obvious inferences about the characters or their actions. May require occasional support.	With support, has difficulty consistently identifying even obvious inferences about the characters or their actions.	Is unable to draw inferences about the characters.

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